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Roboheart, C-Type, 2017.

A LOOK AT BURNING MAN'S MOST SPECTACULAR MOMENTS

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Number four on festival founder Larry Harvey's "*10 Principles of Burning Man*" is "radical self-reliance"—the invitation to "the individual to discover, exercise, and rely on his or her inner resources." And yet it's pretty hard to separate the long-running annual celebration of art and excess that brings tens of thousands of free-spirits-for-a-week to Black Rock, Nevada, from its overt (and often absurd) exhibitionism. Danish shooter Anders Overgaard all but confirmed this paradox in 2013, when he covered Burning Man on assignment for *Condé Nast Traveler* (U.K.) and walked away with a book that, he says, practically shot itself. "You'd just be standing there, and something will cross your frame," he says. "And you'd be, like, was that really just E.T.?"

Every year, artists spend months before *the late August event* creating works that are less pieces than full-on buildings, some of them shelter from the dust (for sleeping, or not), most of them torched at the end of the week in the ultimate live-for-the-moment tribute.

“The Burning Man philosophy is not at all what we think of when we think of design, where endurance and longevity are usually things of value,” he says. “That’s why I called the book *Nothing Left Behind*. There, everything—the burners, the art, the moment—is there for that time, and after that they are nowhere to be seen except in people’s memory or in a few pictures.”

Nothing Left Behind will be published in September in conjunction with a gallery show at Jason McCoy Gallery in New York. Here, Overgaard takes us through some of the 22,000-plus frames that made the cut.



Jeff Schomberg and Laura Kimpton's massive steel word structure "BELIEVE" was part of their Large Word Series (previous installations were "MOM," "OINK," "LOVE," and "EGO"), made of 12-foot high, 4-foot thick letters that span a total of 70 feet. It was as much about interaction as it is about making a statement. People loved to jump and climb all over it. And it wasn't burned—it's now in permanent residence at City Hall Plaza in Reno.



I took this shot of the Robot Heart community, a “creative collective” that served as one of Burning Man’s central gathering points, as the sun rose one morning. We’d come from Europe, so being on the west coast, we’d wake up really early, like 4 in the morning, and go out as the sun was rising. Everyone else, of course, was still partying and having a great time from the night before. Everything would come alive with the daylight.



“The Man” was the main art piece of 2013, a giant spaceship around which everything, and everybody, revolved. It burned to the ground on the final Saturday.



Peter Hudson's "Homourobos" was an interactive, 22-foot-high zoetrope in which 18 human-sized monkeys hung from steel and aluminum branches. Drums at the base of the tree made the piece spin.



I'd ride my bike around and these massive dust storms would come out of nowhere. You couldn't see 10 meters ahead, and then all of a sudden there would be a building-sized sculpture. This piece, "Crashsite_Alpha13" by Aphidoidea, was meant to confront visitors with evidence of alien life. This is not where I saw E.T.



When I arrived, I felt, like, there's no way I'm going to be able to cover this. It's too big and too much. This piece, Marco Cochrane's "Truth is Beauty," played a role in that. It stood over 55 feet tall and weighed nearly 7,000 pounds. It was constructed using 55,000 single welds, 2,000 square feet of stainless steel mesh, and 1,500 individual multi-colored LED lights! It's now in permanent residence in San Francisco.



After dark, everything got all disco-y and colorful. It was very much about where you stood. Things were just ongoing; crazy things would happen right in front of you. Douglas Ruuska's "Let's Go Fly a Bike!" had also appeared at Burning Man 2011. The artist's statement for this one in particular thanked those who helped make "this crazy-assed, tom-foolishness happen."



“The Temple of Whollyness” by Gregg Fleishman was about becoming more whole with yourself and the world. It was an epic architectural feat: 87 feet by 87 feet at its base, and 64 feet tall, and made entirely of geometric interlocking wood pieces that fit together without nails, glue, or metal fasteners.



This piece, “Project Insanity” by New York artist Jessica Panuccio, was made entirely of recycled materials. One moment you might see a girl in a bikini on top of it; the next, a panda bear. The thing about Burning Man—and the really great thing if you’re a photographer—is that everyone there wants their photos taken. Everyone is extremely creative, and doing amazing things, and freely expressing themselves. They welcome your art.



This piece was called "Excess Baggage," by Warren Lisser, Susie Lisser, and Anita Grunder. It contained a box asking, "What's your baggage?" When I think back to Burning Man 2013, I think it was a special year. But I also think everyone who attends, whatever year, feels that way. It for sure blew my mind. I'm also a little afraid to go back. Can you have that experience twice?



The Steam Bath Dome is part of the Burning Man philosophy of gifting. Principle number two of the 10 principles of Burning Man says that the community is devoted to acts of gift giving, and the bath dome was a nod to that. The teepees outside it were erected on site by visitors.